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### Superintendent Grateful for Ongoing Support of GWU School of Education

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# Superintendent Grateful for Ongoing Support of GWU School of Education

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Office of University  
Communications

June 8, 2016

*Dr. Lory D. Morrow ('06) Honored for her Work in Davidson County, N.C.*

Dr. Lory D. Morrow's relationship with Gardner-Webb University didn't end after she earned her Doctor of Education in School Leadership in 2006. As superintendent of Davidson County (N.C.) Schools, she values the continued support she receives from professors in the School of Education.

"Dr. Doug Eury, Dr. David Shellman and Dr. Ron Nanney (retired) guided, challenged and helped me grow personally and professionally throughout my educational journey at Gardner-Webb," shared Morrow, who lives in Winston-Salem, N.C. "Dr. Eury, Dr. Shellman, Dr. Nanney and Dr. Stephen Laws have continued to guide and mentor me to this day as I have served in various educational leadership roles. I will always be grateful for their continued support and advice. These long-lasting relationships I have built with Gardner-Webb professors and fellow students—now colleagues—are one of the many reasons Gardner-Webb will always have a special place in my heart. I would not be where I am today without this ongoing support."

Morrow is the first female to serve as superintendent of Davidson County Schools, a system that has 35 schools, with a new high school under construction, 2,400 employees and 20,000 students. During her career in education, she has worked in four school districts across North Carolina, as an elementary school teacher, literacy facilitator, assistant principal, principal, executive director and deputy superintendent. Before coming to Davidson County, Morrow was deputy superintendent for the Gaston County, N.C., school system.

She was named the 2016 Regional Superintendent of the Year by the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium, nominated by fellow superintendents in the 16 school districts that make up the Piedmont Triad Region, according to information from Davidson County Schools.

"I was extremely humbled to receive this recognition from my fellow superintendents," Morrow said. "This award truly belongs to the students and staff of Davidson County Schools. I could not do this work without the support of the school board. Being a school

leader, whatever your role, is challenging and time-consuming. I am grateful for all the support I have received from my husband and family throughout my educational career. I would not have been able to achieve the success I have achieved without their support and love.”

Just as she is thankful for the support from her school system and family, Morrow also appreciates the mentors who have guided her along the way. “From the time I was a young child, I knew I wanted to become a teacher,” she reflected. “I am the oldest of four siblings. Babysitting, teaching swim lessons and coaching swimming helped prepare me to be a teacher. The mother of one of my high school friends was an elementary teacher. She encouraged me in college to come back during my breaks and teach with her in her elementary classroom. Her support, advice and feedback helped to prepare me to be a teacher long before my final semester in college when I was formally student teaching.”

Another mentor, who was an elementary principal, encouraged her to go into administration. She constantly provided Morrow with school-level leadership experiences and allowed her to leave the classroom to serve all teachers in the school as a literacy facilitator. Because mentors made a difference in her career, Morrow seeks to do the same for other educators while making sure students receive a quality education.

“My goal in any school or district where I have served has always been to make decisions in the best interest of all students to provide them the best possible educational experience,” she affirmed. “I also believe in ‘paying it forward’—investing, mentoring and growing other young leaders in my district as they are tomorrow’s future leaders. I was very fortunate to have people who believed and invested in me and it is now my responsibility as the superintendent to do the same for other young leaders in my district and across our state.”

Gardner-Webb’s graduate programs offer more chances for young educators to be mentored, and she highly recommends the University. “The professors work to provide real school site experiences, ideas, actions and processes you can take back the next day and implement in your school,” she asserted. “They challenged my thinking, exposed me to a variety of levels of research, and I had the opportunity to interact with highly-respected educators from across the state as I was preparing myself to one day become a school superintendent. I valued the time I spent learning, collaborating and debating with my colleagues. The opportunity to build relationships with the faculty and fellow students helps you grow and prosper as an educator for the rest of your career.”